

OVERVIEW OF GREEN LANE PLANNING HISTORY

Land on the North West side of Green Lane Ashwell

Ref: 24/02214/FP

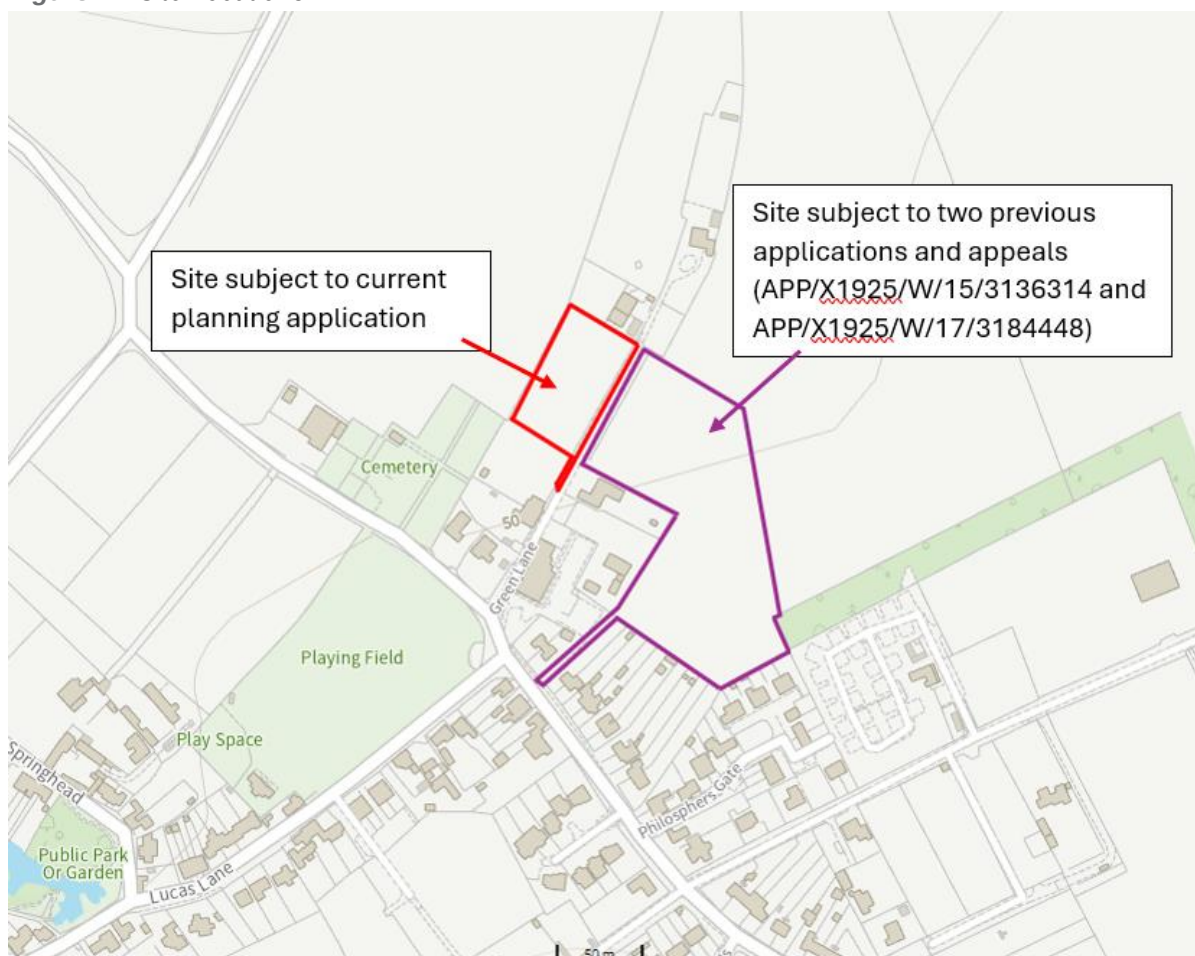
Introduction

This document has been prepared to provide clarity surrounding the planning history for Green Lane. A number of objections refer to the two former appeal decisions on Green Lane and it is suggested that the appeals were related to the application site.

The planning application at Land on the North West side of Green Lane seeks approval for 7 new homes. The site is shown in red in Figure 1. There is no recent planning history at the site.

Two planning applications were refused and two appeals dismissed at Land rear of 39-59 Station Road. This site is shown in purple in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Site Locations



This document will set out why the appeals were dismissed at Land rear of 39-59 Station Road (the site in purple) and set out how the planning application at Land on the North West side of Green Lane (the site in red) overcomes those concerns. This document will focus on highway matters as these were the reason both appeals were dismissed.

Land Rear of 39-59 Station Road

2015 Planning Application (15/00691/1) / 2016 Appeal – APP/X1025/W/15/3136314

An application for 14 homes was refused planning permission on 1 July 2015 with an appeal dismissed on 24 February 2016. The application proposed vehicular access from Green Lane with a pedestrian/cycle access onto Station Road.

The application proposed re-marking Green Lane to provide 'give-way' markings and provide a passing/waiting area on Green Land adjacent to the access to the site. However, highways related Reasons for Refusal related to:

- Green Lane is an inadequate width for two-way traffic; and
- The narrow width of Green Lane is inadequate to accommodate large vehicles (e.g. delivery and refuse vehicle) satisfactorily.

In the appeal, the Inspector dismissed the scheme citing the following concerns:

- The distance vehicles would need to reverse if they met on the single-track part of Green Lane;
- The absence of pedestrian provision on Green Lane; and
- The single-track section impeding access by emergency vehicles.

2017 Planning application (16/02863/1) / 2018 Appeal – APP/X1925/W/17/3184448

An application for 9 dwellings was refused planning permission on 17 March 2017 and dismissed at appeal on 22 February 2018. The same access arrangements were proposed as the 14 unit scheme and it was refused on the same highways grounds as the original application.

An updated plan was submitted during the appeal process which proposed increasing the width of Green Land to 5.5m along the unmade part of the road (with the exception of a 10m stretch outside no. 5 which would remain 3.7m wide). This would be secured via a Grampian planning condition.

During the appeal, the Inspector remained concerned about highway safety with the following concerns:

- The distance vehicles would need to reverse if they met on the single-track part of Green Lane;
- The single-track section impeding access by emergency vehicles; and
- Whilst the increase in width of Green Lane would overcome many of the concerns, the Inspector was concerned that, due to land ownership disputes, it may not be possible to widen the road under a Grampian condition.

Planning application at Land West of Green Lane

To overcome the Reasons for Refusal and the Inspector's concerns from the other site on Green Lane, the current planning application proposes a number of access arrangements:

- 2.4m by 25m visibility splays – suitable for a 20mph design speed in line with Manual for Streets / HCC guidance;
- Closures of the existing gated site access and a new access provided slightly to the north which will serve the 7 new homes;
- Localised widening of Green Lane in the vicinity of the access to allow a car and refuse/emergency vehicle to pass;
- Provision of 2 pedestrian refuge areas which will be protected by wooden bollards; and
- The access into the site provides a turning head for large refuse vehicles which are used in the local area. This provides a betterment as there is currently no turning head in Green Lane.

Following a consultation response from HCC, an additional pedestrian refuge is proposed near no. 7 Green Lane and a drawing has been formally submitted to demonstrate this amendment. HCC Highways have responded and noted that: *"The applicant has provided another pedestrian refuge area as shown on drawing (Site Access Arrangements and Green Lane Improvements Rev F). This will definitely help with pedestrian access / access for all along Green Lane"*.

The proposed access arrangements, including the localised widening of Green Lane, would eliminate the occasions when two vehicles meet and therefore any need for reversing. It would also ensure safe access for emergency vehicles. This overcomes previous concerns along Green Lane. The localised widening along Green Lane would occur within the applicants ownership, thereby removing the need for a Grampian condition.

The 3 pedestrian refuge points provide safe access for pedestrians which overcomes former concerns raised regarding pedestrian safety.

The highway concerns raised by North Hertfordshire District Council and the Planning Inspectorate in relation to the other site on Green Lane have therefore been overcome through this planning application.

Other Reasons for Refusal

Both planning applications contained a Reason for Refusal relating to the 'significant urbanising' effect at the edge of the settlement which would fail to maintain the character of the wider countryside.

The Inspector in the first appeal concluded:

"Although the proposal would result in harm from the loss of an open area of land, there would be potential for mitigation in terms of layout and landscaping. As such the development would not result in any significant harm to the settlement pattern or to the character or appearance of the area".

Similarly the Inspector in the second appeal concluded:

“Consistent with the conclusions of my colleague, I am thus satisfied that any harm from the loss of open land would be mitigated, and would not result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the countryside or the village”.

The current planning application at Land North West of Green Lane seeks approval for 7 high quality homes set within a landscape context. Furthermore, the site is located within the settlement boundary and forms part of Ashwell village settlement.

Conclusion

Land North West side of Green Lane is an entirely different site to that which has substantial planning history.

This document has set out the Reasons for Refusal of planning permission and the concerns raised by a Planning Inspector in relation to development at Land rear of 39-59 Station Road. In addition, this document has also set out the access proposals within the current planning application at Land on the North West side of Green Lane and has explained how they overcome concerns previously raised along Green Lane.

The proposal within the planning application would comply with design standards and make adequate provision for visibility and vehicle turning. The improvements to Green Lane would allow for vehicles to pass, turning for refuse vehicles and refuse areas for those pedestrians that wish to use them.